

# Million-Dollar "Freak" Garden Hobby of London's Foremost Lawyer



## Special Correspondence.

LONDON, March 17.—Spending a million dollars on a garden has been the unique hobby of Sir Frank Crisp, one of England's foremost lawyers. It is not often that members of the legal profession go in for intensive cultivation save in the raising of fine crops of law suits; but with Sir Frank it is different. His legal practice alone has not satisfied the cravings of his soul, and his exuberant fancy has overflowed into building a garden beside which no other plot of ground on earth can hold a candle.

Friar Park, just outside the fashionable little English village of Henley, is one of the most astonishing pieces of landscape work in the whole of England, if not in the world. Sir Frank Crisp has been preparing this 200-acre plot for nearly 20 years, and now curiosity seekers and tourists are flocking to it in such numbers that he has had to try to keep down the number of visitors by charging admission.

## POND OF AMUSEMENT.

As you enter the grounds you are confronted with several signs placed carefully along the edges of the carriage drive. They bear the puzzling legend, "Don't keep off the grass." This mandate mixes most of the visitors up from the start, and large numbers go to the lodgekeeper to ask whether the grass may be walked on or not. Sir Frank used to have a sign reading "The grass may be walked upon," but he substituted the present one in order to study "psychological effects." The confusion of the visitors affords him a fund of amusement. This, however, is only the beginning of the surprises. The house, the grounds, the walks are arranged purposely to delude, and when you have spent an afternoon at Friar park, with its many allusions, delusions and entanglements, you come out into the world again shorn of much of your confidence in the impressions which your ordinary five senses convey.

## OPTICAL ILLUSIONS.

For instance, on the left hand side of

the winding carriage way which leads up to the great palace-like mansion is a series of three or four ponds. One of your first "astonishers" is to see several well dressed women, accompanied, perhaps, by a couple of children, or a gentleman apparently walking complacently through one of the ponds, waist deep in the water. You are inclined at first to think the people either water-tight lunatics or else lay figures worked by some kind of mechanism, but this latter idea soon is dispelled by seeing the people are only walking over a ledge of rocks placed behind one of the ponds in such a manner that it gives the appearance of people walking through the water as they cross over.

## FAKE PREHISTORIC TRAGEDY.

Even the rocks themselves which form the stepping stones for this curious stage effect present unique features. They show the footprints of some antediluvian monster, together with those of a man, a woman and some children. The various footprints suggest a pre-historic tragedy, showing that the man stayed behind to fight the supposed monster, while the woman and children fled to safety. Some of the stones are without footprints, these indicating, perhaps, the most exciting parts of the chase. "That's where they jumped," Sir Frank explains, with laughter. The mystery of how these special stones came to be in their particular place and how the markings of the feet are so perfectly plain is explained when Sir Frank calmly informs you that he had the stones "faked" out of stuff called "pumice," and placed there purposely. The pre-historic tragedy also is an invention of the same brain. Not only do the stepping stones and the hidden terrace present a delusion with reference to the submergence of passengers along the footway, but the ponds themselves convey an erroneous impression. One pond appears to be about three feet above the other, but as a matter of fact, both bodies of water are in direct communication, and consequently at the same level.

Close to the ponds is a cave modeled

after the famous Blue Grotto of Capri. Here a series of mirrors give weird effects, and those who have seen the original blue cave agree that Sir Frank's is a close imitation. From the ponds a curious view of the mansion is obtained. The axes of water nearest the house is so placed that it gives an exact reflection of the dwelling and the water being perfectly still as a rule, one is puzzled to decide at first glance whether he is looking at a mirror of the house in the lake or its projected mirage in the sky. So many curious surprises have already confronted the visitor that he almost is prepared for anything.

## MANUSCRIPT IN STONE.

The outside of Sir Frank Crisp's house is, perhaps one of the most curious in the world. Every inch of the palace-like structure is carved with designs representing friars of every description—the friars, by the way, being the motif of the whole place. Friars "from grave to gay, from lively to severe" are seen everywhere, and in addition to these, there are mottoes, puzzles and inscriptions—the exterior of the houses being as it were a veritable manuscript in stone. On the eastern front which faces the beautiful terrace overlooking the grounds, Sir Frank has placed a number of puzzles or designs with double meanings. For instance, there is a match which illustrates "The Maiden's Prayer," while a box of bear's grease satirizes Byron's poem, "The Greece, but living Greece no more." On the corner of the building is a design showing some cubes. If you count them over carefully you will find only six, whereas Sir Frank can prove to you that there really are seven in all. The base of each cube is so drawn that the whole makes a complete optical illusion.

## SURE THING PROPOSITIONS.

On the same corner near these cubes are two segments of a circle so placed that one appears much longer than the other. Yet if you test them by measure, you will find that they are of the same length. Just above these are two straight lines which appear to be of equal length, and yet if measured prove to be different. Above these are two other lines, one appearing consid-

erably longer than the other. Sir Frank promptly offers to bet you they are of the same length. They really are not, but by this time your sense of proportion has been so mixed up that you naturally refuse to bet with Sir Frank. He then shows you that you would have won "hands down," and so you have the vain regret of wishing you had taken him up.

## FAKE SWISS SCENERY.

Still the surprises in stone on the building are exceeded by other surprises in much bigger stones in the marvelous "rockery" close at hand. Sir Frank has had built, just to the right of his mansion, a veritable mountain, in imitation of the Swiss Matterhorn. It is a faithful representation of that famous peak. More than 7,000 tons of massive rocks were brought from Yorkshire to form it, and Sir Frank had it remodeled four times before it satisfied him. Hundreds of quarry men worked night and day shifting the rocks about until they were all in the exact places he assigned them. Inside the mountain are some wonderful grottoes, built to represent ice caves. Streams representing mountain torrents dash down from these rocks. The water is pumped up to the top by special machinery, built at enormous cost. Everything is concealed so wonderfully that one cannot but imagine all he sees to be perfectly natural. And yet, at a turn of the hand Sir Frank—as reigning deity—can cause the "mountain torrents" to dry up. So much attention has been paid to the heights, they cannot be seen by the naked eye. These tiny animals were built "to scale," and are just the size they would appear in Switzerland if seen some distance off through a glass.

## WONDERFUL ROCKERY.

Inside the ice caves—which are marvels of imitation—Sir Frank has placed an enormous crane. If you hold a glass of water up to the back of the bird the water disappears. Few visitors understand how this is done, but the secret lies in the fact that the crane is a "mountain torrent" flow just under the crane's feet, and this forms

a sort of syphon which sucks the water out of the glass as you hold it up. This was explained to the writer by Sir Frank, and he asked me please not to tell any one. It is, therefore, only mentioned here as a state secret. All the flowers that grew on the Swiss Alps are to be found on the Henley flat-tops, together with rare plants from such cold districts as the highest Himalayas and other places. Gardeners come from all over the world to inspect Sir Frank's wonderful "rockery."

## TEN ACRES OF HOT HOUSES.

But the plants in the rockery do not compare with those which he has in his 25 separate conservatories, occupying about 10 acres of ground. In these conservatories which are built by the most modern methods, are gathered many of the rarest plants in the world, some of which have names that would give Webster's Unabridged dictionary a run for its money. There are whole families of "fish eating" and "insect trapping" varieties, and to watch them just at meal times is highly entertaining. Here one may study Professor Darwin's theory of the "consciousness of flowers," with every chance of indulging the imagination.

Quite a number of the plants and flowers in the conservatories have "faces" which greatly resemble those of human beings. Sir Frank takes delight in pointing out these weirdnesses and listening to the astonishment of his guests.

Inside the Crisp mansion the idea of the friar is carried out with the same degree of persistency as on the exterior. Even the electric light bulbs have friars' noses, which are turned up when the lights are on, down when they are off. An immense hallway, giving one the impression of the interior of a cathedral, is carved in elaborate designs, in which every sort of friar is represented.

## AMERICANS WELCOMED.

This flower fancying lawyer has a special fondness for American visitors who go over his grounds. He likes to hear their breezy remarks on various points of the "freak" garden, and these sayings of the American cousins have in many instances been incorporated in

an elaborate catalogue which Sir Frank has just published. In the dining room of his magnificent house he has a framed Declaration of Independence done in tapestry—certainly an unusual decoration for the home of an English lawyer. But this is not the most singular fact about this particular Declaration. If you look closely at it you will see that one of the words in which it is executed is in white letters. This little joke at the expense of American sentiment is characteristic of all Sir Frank Crisp's whimsicalities.

## GARDEN COST \$1,000,000.

Considering the immense amount of work which Sir Frank has had done on his grounds, house and conservatories, the cost has not been under \$2,500,000, the gardens alone costing a million. Sir Frank has been preparing this 200-acre plot for nearly 20 years, and now curiosity seekers and tourists are flocking to it in such numbers that he has had to try to keep down the number of visitors by charging admission.

## HEAD OF GREAT LAW FIRM.

Sir Frank is head of the great law firm of Aushurst, Morris, Crisp & Co. His connection with it began when he was sixteen years old, and his first appearance there is the subject of a well-known story by John Morris, who was for many years head of the firm. When Sir Frank was a boy, his grandfather died and he asked me if

we would take him as an article clerk. I asked what sort of a young fellow he was, and his uncle replied that it was difficult to describe him. But, he said, at home he called him the cat, because he always falls on his feet.

"That was quite enough for me. He proved himself assiduous to his duties, and one day he came to me and asked for two or three days' leave of absence, saying that he was going up for his examination at the London University. Knowing that he must have had little time for study I laughed at him and told him that he could not hope to get a degree from the law without great proficiency and hard study. He seemed quite confident, however, and we were all astonished when he took a first class degree in all subjects."

Another of his associates declares that the old legal maxim that the first step in a lawsuit was to get something on account of costs now has been changed to "Get Frank Crisp."

## WHY HE IS POPULAR.

Sir Frank is one of the most popular residents of Henley, and his popularity is explained by incidents like the following: He received a great many telegrams at his country house, when he was knighted he declared that he owed much of his success to the efficiency of the telegraph service at the local postoffice. He invited all the members of the staff to a celebration of his knighthood, and during the dinner he learned that the rule when a woman telegraphs leaves the service to be married, and receives an allowance of one month's pay for every year she has served in the postoffice. Sir Frank promptly announced that he was going to double the allowance to every Henley woman telegraphist who married, and since then he has carried out his promise to at least \$225 in one case and \$400 in another.

He is an LL. B. and B. A. of London University, a justice of the peace for Oxfordshire, and a member of the Law Society, the Solicitors' Benevolent association and the Law association. He was secretary of the Royal Microscopical society for ten years and treasurer of the Linnaean society for a longer period.

W. B. NORTHROP.

## War on English "Work Shys" Doomed Henceforth to Toil

### Special Correspondence.

LONDON, March 18.—Vagrancy in England is henceforth to be regarded as a species of crime. A bill is soon to be passed by parliament that will rob the professional tramp of his glorious irresponsibility. A rough time is coming for peripatetic professional philosophers who wear their hair matted and have an aversion to soap and water. Roaming about England, and living on the generosity of the public, is an army of 60,000 hoboes—men and women—who regard work as more or less "humane." They refuse to go into the workhouse because in these establishments the pauper has to do oakum picking and stone-breaking, which are inconsistent with the ethics of people who prefer to follow the modest yet by the files of the field which neither sow, nor spin, nor gather into barns.

England has always had this tramp problem to deal with, and the latest effort from the unemployed question; and authorities admit that it has to be handled in a different fashion altogether. Over and above the army of the unemployed—which is variously estimated as between half a million and a million—there is this floating population who are "work shys" and who would not do a stroke of labor except under severe compulsion.

## SOME PRIMITIVE CURES.

In the early days, the forefathers of the present generation dealt with the vagrant population with the utmost severity. The confirmed hobo was whipped for the first offense, but if that did not act as a stimulus to exertion, and the delinquent still followed his propensities for a life of ease, he was brought up before the authorities and his ears were cut off. Earlessness as a cure of laziness did not seem to act very effectively, however, and as a further incentive to exertion, the government of the day in the fourteenth century resorted to branding a great "V" meaning vagrant on the forehead of the man who, after being whipped and losing his ears, still persisted in refusing to

work. But even these methods of gentleness did not prove very effective, and finally, a law was passed whereby the crime of begging was punished with hanging.

Many of these early punishments fell into what Grover Cleveland termed innocuous desuetude, but they were revived in a modified form in 1824, when whipping was "restored" to the vagrant as a punishment for refusing to work. Whipping is occasionally used now in England, when a man in the workhouse refuses to perform his given task.

## STEADILY ON INCREASE.

But, despite every measure of punishment, vagrancy has been steadily on the increase in England during the last 20 years. According to a government report, it has risen from 40,000 to 60,000—and there is today in England a steady "unworkable" population comprising the larger number.

The recent poor law commission has emphasized the fact that the present system of treatment meted out to the tramp is "unworkable" inasmuch as the population has a tendency rather to increase than diminish the number of people who reach that condition from their own preference. There is a large body of sentiment in England which advocates the administration of kindness and generosity with regard to the submerged portion of the population, and while this treatment is, perhaps, unappreciated by the authorities, there is another, and more vicious element of the body politic which takes advantage of this state of affairs. Every year the enormous sum of \$20,000,000 is expended in England, and \$10,000,000 of this is distributed in London alone. The giving of these sums is not safe-guarded as carefully as it should be, and the consequences is that vast numbers of unworthy people manage to get "assistance," while many of the real cases of distress are neglected.

## ARMY OF DESTITUTION.

According to an investigation recently conducted by the London county council, it was found that every night in London there are 2,000 people who take shelter in doorways, under arches

of bridges, and beneath stairways. While a few of these are genuine cases of destitution, many have refused to go into the workhouses, as they object to having to do workhouse tasks, and to take the inevitable bath which the authorities insist upon.

It is not often that officials descend to humor in submitting their reports on such serious subjects, but recently the secretary of the Charity Organization society, in his report of the government on the subject of vagrancy, gave some amusing instances of the state of mind of the workless, idle tramp, who "makes his living" by doing nothing, and doing it to the best of his ability, which is to beg.

"One tramp," says the report, "was asked how it was that he never performed his workhouse task. His reply was characteristic of the class. 'I know how it is; it must be something the matter with my constitution. I eat well and I sleep well, but when I see a bit of work, I goes all of a tremble.'"

## "FAMILY TRAMPS."

Another species of tramp is "the family man." There are in England thousands of these "family tramps" going about the country. The report describes a family of six—a man, woman, and four children. The man, who is a tramp, refused to go into the workhouse, and the pitiable plight of the woman and children was the constant source of revenue by which they all subsisted. Many tramps without children "borrow" them, paying their fellow tramps so much per week for the hire of the youngsters. Tramps with children are, in a way, a species of small "capitalists" as compared to those without them. The average "earnings" of a tramp with three children is about 75c to \$1 per day—considerably more than many working men get in England.

## IT IS THEIR PRIDE.

"Family tramps" often pride themselves on the fact that their children were not born "under shelter." If a woman has been taken into the workhouse the so-called "husband" exercises his right to take his discharge and that of his family at any time, and in this manner to get the woman out in time to keep up the reputation of the family and to be able to say that none of his children was born "in the house." It is considered a disgrace among the respectable tramp fraternity to have reared any of their offspring under civilized conditions. The attractions of the road

are too great for many of these people to descend to making their living by any of the processes known to ordinary mortals, and England is too charitable to see any of them actually suffer. The amount of money annually distributed as alms to the tramp is stated in a government report to be not less than \$15,000,000.

Some years ago, one of the members of the tramp fraternity issued a manifesto to his fellow tramps, which outlined the life they led in the following language:

"We have more liberty than any king on earth; we live secure in peace or war; we are not pressed for soldiers nor taxes; if we commit anything illegal, who will sue us? We are the common people are afraid to offend us." He then broke into poetry, saying:

"When the subsidy's increased  
We are not a penny 'sewed';  
Nor will any go to law  
With any of us, for we have straw.  
All the happiness he brags  
He doth owe unto his rags."

## LAWS TO BE AMENDED.

The main defect in the English poor law at present is that there is no power of detention, and it is to remedy this shortcoming that the new vagrancy act is to be introduced. This measure will establish a central authority which will act on reports submitted to it by various charitable organizations—such as the Salvation Army, and similar bodies—and will have the power to issue a sort of "warrant," taking a license, for the arrest and detention of any vagrant. Each person so rounded up is to be committed to a labor colony and his "license" is to be of such a stringent character that if he runs away from the colony to which he has been committed, the local authorities will be able to give him a term of hard labor in a regular prison.

In a measure, there is already in operation in England such a labor colony. It is known as "Huddersfield Bay" land colony. It has proved itself a decided success, the only difficulty being that the authorities who run it—the London county council—have no power to enforce the law. The council of Warwick has taken an active personal interest in this colony and has employed a number of men from it to do work on her estate, Easton Lodge. In speaking of the men's work, Lady Warwick said recently in an interview:

"The labor of the men from Huddersfield colony was not quite so rapid as that of

the skilled working man who keeps his muscles in good training, but this was due to the kind of work demanded of them, however, made up for this lack of strength by the willing and persevering spirit they showed."

There is another side to the Huddersfield colony, however. A large number of the men quit when they had got a sample of the kind of work demanded of them. Most of it is digging and other agricultural pursuits, but it proved too much for the men whom John Burns has described as the "weary Willie" of the road, preferring their condition of glorious independence to taking their dose of work along with the rest of the world. One man, who proved to be a magistrate for his persistence in fighting shy of labor, offered an ingenious excuse. "The Bible says that work is a curse," said this philosopher of the highway, "and, therefore, it is wrong of me to go in for it. It is against my religion."

By linking up the labor colonies with what is practically a penal system—for all persons who are sent to the proposed colonies will be detained a year, and cannot go away without a ticket-of-leave—England is attempting to solve her tramp problem on similar lines to those carried out by Germany, Holland and other countries. Outside of Hamburg, for instance, there is an enormous reservation known as the "strangers' camp." Here all vagrants are rounded up, and this is one reason why you never see tramps and unemployed walking about and begging in German cities. England, up to this time, has permitted an immense latitude to her tramps on the principle of "human liberty," but with a tremendous amount of actual unemployment to face, and an end is to be put to wretchedness.

Up to this time, England has been looked upon as the Mecca for the men who refuse to work. In fact, on the continent, the luxurious workhouses of England are regarded as more fitting abodes than many of the homes of the alien population; and many emigrants are glad to get to England for the sake of the luxurious workhouses which the government. Weary Willie must now get to work. American hoboes, contemplating their annual summer tour to the British Isles had better cancel the luxurious passages which they may have engaged on the various cattle boats leaving for England.

A. L. SCOTT.

## American Women to Charm Edward Back to Health

### Special Correspondence.

LONDON, March 18.—In the circle of the king's friends, it is well known that Edward VII is in a state of health which is causing grave anxiety. For years the king has gone the pace steadily and "suddenly, almost without warning, the brake which controls the nerve force has snapped and there is serious trouble." This was the definition of his condition which was given me one day this week by a great specialist who was privately summoned to a consultation at Buckingham palace recently. His majesty has worn himself out—no one would be guilty of saying with disparagement—but at least with a continuous good time. On the day when the king opened parliament no one who listened to his speech ever thought he would be able to get through with it, but the British press, realizing his objection to any insinuation that his health was not what it might be, refrained from commenting. The nervous of his throat are so limp that his physicians have condemned him to silence for at least two hours a day. He may drive, walk or sit in the open during the day, but on no account must he speak. To condemn the king to silence is like condemning him to eternal torture. His energy is immense. This makes him a trying and difficult patient for he is never happy unless he is rambling somewhat in the center of a lively crowd, with wit, beauty and charm dancing attendance upon him.

## AMERICANS IN FAVOR.

American women will make things as easy for him as they always do at Biarritz or Marienbad. Consuelo, Duchess of Manchester, one of the few women who never pines on the king, will be ready to take a morning walk with him, which no doubt will be enjoyed in silence; there will also be also to play bridge in the evening. (By the way, the duchess, who used to be such a poor player, has improved considerably lately.) The Drexels will also be turning up—if they are not there already—by the time this reaches you.

Anthony Drexel is one of the American men of whom the king has made a pet and they are very thick indeed. The American women in Biarritz had the king's suite of rooms sumptuously decorated with flowers for his arrival. Lilies, roses and lilac blossomed all about the king's suite. I think it was Lady Essex who sent a thrush and a blackbird each in a golden cage tied up with pink ribbons. This started a vogue after which for months women have been sending in their bouquets. But this year the smart American women of the king's set know better than to send him gifts of singing birds whose music they realize his majesty's nerves would not stand.

## DEJECTED THEIR CHARGES.

Smart society women have had a revelation in discovering that their babies have been imbibing a new patent medicine for the most delicate infant, but which is guaranteed to put them to sleep for nine hours at a stretch. This medicine has found its way into the most exclusive circles in Mayfair. It is a very unscrupulous nurse who either object to being awakened by their charges or want to have a "night out" when their masters and mistresses are attending some festivity such as a court or a late dinner party.

The story is going round that Mr. and Mrs. Lulu Harcourt have been in the greatest state of anxiety because their only son and heir slept for 12 hours without a break. When he awoke he was curiously dazed, though he showed no other symptoms of having been drugged. A doctor having been called in, he instantly diagnosed the case as the result of morphine.

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